(Shakawe, near Muhembo, Kwikamba, Nata, Kasane); western Rhodesia, 10 (mainly Kazungula); Transvaal, 1 (Newington)]. *M. p. meridionalis*, 70. *M. p. cyanostictus*, 9.

Remarks: By September, birds of all the southern African populations of this bee-eater are too blued above and weathered to be of such use in work, on subspecification, though the throat-spot variable is unaffected. I have based my conclusions on the adequate samples taken between May and August which presently lie before me.

With the recognition of *M. p. argutus*, the South African range of *M. p. meridionalis* will now be: coastal Natal, eastern Zululand, eastern Swaziland, the Transvaal, Rhodesia (except extreme west), and Moçambique. Farther north extends to Tanzania, parts of Kenya, Uganda, Malawi, Zambia (except south-west), the southern and eastern savannas of the Congo, Angola north of *M. p. argutus*, and the Portuguese Congo.

For the loan of material to augment that in the Durban Museum, I am grateful for assistance rendered by Mr. M. P. Stuart Irwin, Ornithologist of the National Museum of Rhodesia, Bulawayo, and Professor J. M. Winterbottom, Director of the Percy FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology, in Cape Town.

Taxonomic notes on some African Sylviinae

by C. M. N. White

Received 26th April, 1967

The present notes form part of a series as already explained in some earlier contributions.

Euryptila

In my *Check List* (1962) I placed this genus after *Camaroptera* but expressed uncertainty as to its affinities. Recent field data, I am informed, suggests that it is very like *Camaroptera* and that it could be merged with that genus.

Eremomela icteropygialis (Lafresnaye)

In view of the various conflicting views about the variation in this species in its south-western range, I have examined material again. I agree with Clancey (1962, Bull. B.O.C. 82, pp. 44–45) that there is no convincing reason for rejecting the lower Orange River as the type locality, and that *perimacha* must become a synonym of the nominate form. I am however doubtful about recognising *E. i. sharpei* Rchw. for birds from northern South West Africa and most of Botswana. Some material seems to exhibit differences whilst other does not. For instance I cannot see any constant differences between birds from the north-west Cape Province and a series from Ovamboland. Specimens from the Kaokoveld are paler below and have very little yellow on the abdomen. Wear and abrasion is also rapid in these areas which makes comparison difficult. At present I therefore prefer to unite these populations.

Eremomela scotops Sundevall

I am now satisfied that the populations which in 1962 I united under the nominate consist of three subspecies. *E. s. chlorochlamys* Clancey (1965, Arnoldia, 2, no. 3, p. 2. Sabi-Lundi confluence) has a brighter and yellower crown, and a more pronounced citrine wash on the grey upper surface,

and is the form of coastal Natal north to Beira in Mozambique and inland to south-eastern Rhodesia. The populations of East Africa north of this new form must be known as *E. s. occipitalis*. They are identical with the nominate form in colour but have shorter tails, 40-43.5 mm. against 45–51.5 mm. Although this form is very slighty differentiated, it seems clear that it is not actually in contact with the nominate form.

Additional material does not confirm *E. s. extrema* White which must be placed as a synonym of *pulchra*.

Sylvietta virens Cassin

The range of the nominate form extends further south into north-east Angola. The recently described *S. v. meridionalis* Ripley & Heinrich (1966, Postilla, no. 95, p. 20. Calulo, Cuanza Sul, Angola) merely continues the characters of *S. v. tando* of north-west Angola by being still whiter on the abdomen and lighter reddish-brown on the throat and chest. The describers remark that *tando* represents an intergrade and would have been better not named. The recognition of how many segments of a cline to name is arbitrary and hence so too is formal recognition of this new form.

Parisoma subcaeruleum (Vieillot)

In south-west Angola the inland birds agree best with *cinerascens* and the small and pale *ansorgei* should be limited to the coastal lowlands north to Benguella.

Parisoma layardi Hartlaub

Examination of a good series confirms the validity of the pale *aridicola* Winterbottom but I cannot distinguish *P. l. subsolana* Clancey (1963, Durban Mus. Nov. 6, p. 253. Molteno, eastern Cape Province) from *aridicola*.

Partial albinism in *Vanellus armatus*

by R. K. Brooke

Received 19th August, 1967

Tree (*Ostrich* 1966 p. 238) mentions a partially albino Blacksmith Plover *Vanellus armatus* (Burchell) in the collection of the National Museum, Bulawayo. Through the courtesy of the Curator and of the Ornithologist there, Mr. M. P. Stuart Irwin, I was recently able to examine this specimen which proved to be more interesting than Tree had suggested. It is unsexed; for reasons to be given below it is probably immature; it was collected in February, 1959 on the Sabi River at Chisumbanje in Rhodesia (20° 50′ S: 32° 15′ E). As in *Pycnonotus barbatus* (Desfontaines) Brooke *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 1965: 114-115) the coloured parts of the plumage are apparently produced by the complementary actions of two melanins with separate genetic controls. In this specimen the dominant or principal melanin is missing. As a result the black parts of the plumage are deep brown, the grey parts are a faint pinkish-brown and the white parts remain white. The spurs are short suggesting immaturity and colourless horn instead of black. There are no statements of colour of the soft parts on the label. The bill now appears as dark brown instead of black as in a normal specimen and the legs are dark reddish-brown instead of black. The colour of the iris is unknown.

Tree (*op. cit.*) also mentions a partially albino Black-crowned Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta* L. This seems to me to be an immature bird in normal plumage matched by other specimens in the collection.